

FRIDAY, JUNE 18, 1999

THE TUSCALOOSA NEWS

Leader of Catholic Church of England and Wales dies

By AUDREY WOODS

The Associated Press

LONDON — Cardinal Basil Hume, leader of the Roman Catholic Church of England and Wales and one of the most admired public figures in Britain, died Thursday. He was 76.

Hume died just hours after his official spokesman announced that his cancer had reached its final stages. The cardinal had asked for renewed prayers.

A modest and humorous man, Hume held a position of remarkable influence and respect in this country, where

Catholics are a minority and the established church is Protestant.

Simple things like his moving prayers at the time of Princess Diana's death and his passionate support for the Newcastle United soccer team found him a place in many non-Catholic hearts.

"He was goodness personified, a true holy man with extraordinary humility and an unswerving dedication," Prime Minister Tony Blair said. "He did much to inspire people of all faiths, and none."

Hume learned of his cancer in April and informed the archdiocese in typically direct manner that he wanted no fuss and

would go on working as long as he could. He described himself as "uncharacteristically, calm and at peace."

He was admitted to London's Hospital of St. John and St. Elizabeth at the end of May, but was able to go to Buckingham Palace on June 2 for a private meeting with Queen Elizabeth II.

She gave him the high honor of the Order of Merit, one of the few awards she bestows by her own choice, rather than the government's. It is given to people of "exceptional distinction."

A funeral mass was scheduled for June 25 at Westminster Cathedral, where his

body will lie in state Monday through Wednesday next week. A memorial mass will likely be held in September, church officials said.

Though he shepherded a flock of just 4.6 million, the cardinal's ability to cut through complicated moral arguments and get to the nub of the matter made his a voice heard beyond his own church.

The cardinal surprised some more dogmatic Christians in 1993 when he affirmed the dignity of homosexuals, telling them "not to develop a sense of guilt or think of themselves as displeasing to God. On the contrary, they are precious to God."

He believed in the value of priestly celibacy, but said he often regretted not having a wife. "I think a successful celibate has to regret he wasn't married," Hume told the BBC in 1992.

Hume was born March 2, 1923, in Newcastle, northern England. He adopted the name Basil after taking his vows as a monk in 1945.

A surprise choice as Roman Catholic primate in 1976, he was a former head of Ampleforth College. After his selection as primate, in the space of just a few months, he was ordained a bishop, then Archbishop of Westminster and cardinal.

Statement To Parents Of Homosexuals Praised

By Jerry Filteau

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A bishops' committee statement to Catholic parents with homosexual sons or daughters has drawn both praise and criticism.

The 20-page statement, "Always Our Children," was released Oct. 1 by the Committee on Marriage and Family of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Its central message is that parents with homosexual sons or daughters should love their children and never reject them, even if the son or daughter engages in activities that the parent cannot accept or condone.

It suggests ways — including counseling and pastoral assistance from church agencies and use of church-based support groups — for parents to work through the flood of emotions and tensions that often accompany discovery of a child's homosexual orientation and establish trust, communication and love.

"This is a compassionate, strong and helpful document," said Father James Shexnayder, director of outreach to the gay and lesbian communities in the Diocese of Oakland, Calif., and executive director of the National Association of Diocesan Lesbian and Gay Ministries.

"We strongly support the U.S. bishops' willingness to reach out in an open, inclusive way to mothers and fathers of gay and lesbian children," said Nancy McDonald, president of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, a nondenominational national organization known as PFLAG.

Augustinian Father John R. Flynn of St. Augustine Parish in Casselberry, Fla., Orlando diocesan director of gay and lesbian ministry and a member of PFLAG, said, "This will help parents see that religion shouldn't come between them and their children. It's an opportunity for parents to feel free to come out of the closet in their Catholic communities and to receive love and support from others."

The statement should help parents see that they do not have to choose either their faith or their child, but that they can choose both, he told Catholic News Service in a telephone interview.

"I would hope that it's going to encourage dio-

ceses and parishes to establish gay and lesbian ministries and support groups," he said.

Bishop Joseph L. Charron of Des Moines, Iowa, said the document "states the church's teaching around homosexuality and homosexual acts in a positively pastoral manner."

Bishop Charron was head of the Committee on Marriage and Family when it began work on the new document. It was completed under his successor, Bishop Thomas J. O'Brien of Phoenix.

"I expect parents, priests and pastoral ministers will discover needed help in this timely statement," Bishop Charron said. He described it as balancing "solid theological foundations with sensitive pastoral care."

Charles Cox, executive director of Dignity/USA, an unofficial Catholic support and advocacy organization of gay, lesbian and bisexual Catholics, commended the statement as a "positive step" but criticized it for insisting on sexual abstinence as the only moral course of action outside heterosexual marriage.

"Dignity believes that expressions of love, including sexual intimacy between two individuals of the same sex, can be morally acceptable," he said.

The bishops' statement draws a sharp distinction between homosexual activity, which it says is objectively immoral, and homosexual orientation, which it said usually is not willed but experienced as a given, and therefore not a question of morality.

Bishop Fabian W. Bruskewitz of Lincoln, Neb., said the statement "seems to say what the Catholic Church has always taught, namely that we must hate sin and still love the sinner.... Our condemnation of sin does not permit us, either figuratively or otherwise, to shoot our wounded."

Father Shexnayder said

in a phone interview that debates over homosexuality and the church are reduced too often to the question of sexual activity vs. chastity, with chastity understood as nothing more than abstaining from sex.

"This document treats chastity as more than abstinence, it treats it as an integrating quality," he said. "Chastity is more than not having sex. It is a question of developing friendship and intimacy in a supportive community, in supportive friendships. The other approach makes sex more important than relationships."

Robert H. Knight of the Family Research Council, a Washington-based organization advocating societal support of the traditional family unit, said he was disappointed that the bishops' committee "appears to be ambivalent about time-tested therapy to recover gender identity and their apparent unfamiliarity with more than 70 years of research that shows environmental factors as paramount in formation of homosexual desires."

The committee statement adopts the stance of the 1975 statement by the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which said many homosexuals "are definitively such because of some kind of innate instinct."

The committee urged parents to suggest counseling, spiritual direction and other supports to their homosexually oriented sons or daughters, and it cited "therapy directed toward changing a homosexual orientation" as a possibility, but it expressed reservations about some claims made for that approach.

Respect for the person, the statement says, "implies respect for the freedom to choose or refuse" such directive therapy.

"Given the present state of medical and psychological knowledge," it adds, "there is no guarantee such therapy will succeed. Thus, there

may be no obligation to undertake it, though some may find it helpful."

PFLAG's McDonald told CNS that the most important thing about the statement is its insistence on not rejecting a homosexual son or daughter because of one's religious beliefs.

"Religious beliefs are often a major barrier" to reconciliation when it is learned that a family member is gay, she said.

The Catholic Parents Network, an organization of Catholic parents of gay and lesbian children, sent a letter of thanks to Bishop O'Brien for issuing "Always Our Children."

"We praise your sensitivity to the range of emotions parents experience and applaud your unambiguous stand for respect and justice for gay and lesbian persons," said the Oct. 5 letter.

"Your message affirms our love for our children. For parents who continue to struggle with this knowledge of their child, your words reflect God's all-embracing, unconditional love," it said.

"With this document, pastoral ministers will be more ready and able to respond compassionately to parents who are struggling," they added. "We believe this message will

nurture healing in family relationships and within our faith communities."

The letter was signed by 37 parents and pastoral ministers meeting in retreat in Garrison, N.Y., the weekend after the pastoral statement's Oct. 1 issuance.

The group had originally planned to meet in Bridgeport, Conn., but Bishop Edward M. Egan of Bridgeport ordered the retreat's cancellation. He citing an ongoing Vatican-requested investigation into gay ministry by the retreat's leaders,

Salvatorian Father Robert Nugent and Sister Jeanine Gramick, a School Sister of Notre Dame.

Father John Harvey, director of Courage, a group for Catholic homosexuals seeking to live chastely, said in an Oct. 3 essay that the statement "needs substantive revision."

He objected to the use of the terms "gay" and "lesbian" in the statement because they "give the public the impression that the homosexual condition is fixed and permanent" and that "one's homosexual orientation is his most important characteristic."

Father Harvey, an Oblate of St. Francis de Sales, also suggested that the statement "stress that the homosexual inclina-

tion cannot be considered as equal to heterosexuality," and that the bishops explain the church's position on gay rights legislation. "Many clergy, parents and young people are confused by the current propaganda in favor of same-sex marriage," he said.

The priest also criticized the "wait and see" advice from the bishops to parents whose children experiment with homosexual behaviors as "very dangerous" and "an invitation to tragedy."

An overlooked aspect of my praying

By Judy Esway
Catholic News Service

My prayer life is simpler these days, different from when I first began pray when I was nearly 40. I'd had a ritual awakening, and at first I was zzy with sweet feelings. I couldn't sit to be with Jesus each day! I didn't know much about prayer then. I assumed more must be better. So I'd keep a little stack of devotional booklets nearby, two or three rosaries and various old prayerbooks. I even had our family Bible with the ornate

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Yielding Yourself to a Loving God, James Krisher writes: "Without surrender, religious practice becomes a kind of magic wherein we try to control reality and manipulate God to do our will."

When I think back to my long, detailed prayers of petition, I think Jesus must have been amused. Not all my prayers were answered, lucky for me. You've heard the saying: "Be careful what you pray for. You just might get it."

Years ago my husband applied for a marvelous new job. It was everything he wanted, and the interview went extremely well. We were thrilled when he was offered the position. But inexplicably, at the last minute, things fell apart.

A few months later the same thing happened with another company. We were stunned.



FAITH IN THE MARKETPLACE

What is the "hard part" of prayer for you?

"Sometimes the only thing that is hard is that I feel I'm bothering God.... But I know that's not true, and so I keep praying." — Ruth (last name withheld), Sioux City, Iowa

"We're a noisy society, and getting the solitude and quiet for prayer is a difficult thing." — James K. Liichow, Tulsa, Okla.

"The only hard part is staying faithful to my commitment to set aside the time to do it." — Carole Wielosinski, Donaldson, Ind.

"My mind wanders. I find repetition boring.... I whine to the Lord how difficult it is to talk to him when I can neither see, hear nor touch him. I complain, 'But I find him so silent.' ... (However) I know in my heart that I do feel his presence ... see him in the eyes of my fellow man ... hear him when he speaks to me in the Scriptures." — Helen Colby Swiers, Ft. Madison, Iowa



An upcoming edition asks: How do you predict that parishes 30 years hence will differ from today's parishes? If you would like to respond for possible publication, please write: Faith Alive! 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.

To pray as Jesus did

By Father John J. Castelot
Catholic News Service

When we pray to Jesus we pray to the risen Christ to whom all power in heaven and on earth has been granted (Matthew 28:18). But how can we visualize a totally transformed person existing beyond time and space?

Fortunately, this transfigured person is the same Jesus presented by the Gospels for our contemplation: the Word made flesh. This is the same Jesus who prayed to his Father, leaving us a model of prayer for our imitation.

The first Christians evidently were impressed and encouraged by Jesus' prayer, especially his prayer in the garden. They were heartened by the effect this prayer had on him.

Remember that Jesus cried out in anguish and begged his Father to take this "cup" from him. But in almost the same breath Jesus entrusted himself to the divine will.

As a result of this confident surrender, Jesus returned to his sleeping disciples with strong, confident resolve.

This amazing change from anxious fear to calm resolve heartened his followers to pray as he did: to voice their honest concern, yes, but to trust that the Father would work in their best interests.

Jesus' request was not granted immediately and he did drink the cup to the dregs, but the Father vindicated him in a way beyond all imagining by raising him to inexpressible glory.

Even when the darkness of closed in and all the light was out, Jesus still could entrust himself with sure confidence to his Father: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Matthew 26:39).

Earlier in Jesus' career a storm threatened to engulf the boat in which he and his disciples were crossing the lake. Through it all Jesus was asleep in the stern, apparently unconcerned.

When his companions roused him and reproached him for his negligence, he stilled the storm and chided them: "Why are you troubled? Do you not yet have faith?" (Mark 4:40)

The community for which Jesus wrote his Gospel was beset by all sorts of difficulties, a fragile bark tossed on a storm-tossed sea. The people of the Gospel were tempted to wonder where Jesus was. Was God asleep, indifferent to their troubles?

Mark assures them that though by no means the case. It may seem so, but they must turn with confident trust to the Father, who hears their prayers.

The last words of the risen Jesus in Matthew's Gospel are words of assurance: "Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

It is this same Christ to whom we turn in prayer, but our prayer must be rooted in trust.

(Father Castelot is a Scripture scholar, author, teacher and lecturer.)

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Bishops' Committee Asks Parents To Love Homosexual Children

By Jerry FiltEAU

WASHINGTON (CNS) — For parents of a homosexual child "Jesus offers you hope, help and healing," says a new statement from the U.S. bishops' Committee on Marriage and Family.

The 20-page statement, "Always Our Children," was made public Oct. 1. It is subtitled, "A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministers."

The statement calls on parents to love, respect and support a son or daughter who is homosexually oriented and to recognize that "our total personhood is more encompassing than sexual orientation."

"God does not love someone any less simply because he or she is homosexual," it says. "God's love is always and everywhere offered to those who are open to receiving it."

It reaffirms church teaching that all persons are called to abstain from sexual activity outside marriage and it warns against presuming that someone who is homosexual is sexually active.

It defends the human rights of homosexual people. It says the Christian community must repudiate any form of violence or unjust discrimination against them and should offer them "understanding and pastoral care."

Near the end of the statement are two series of pastoral recommendations — one for parents, one for church ministers — to address specific pastoral and other needs of homosexual people and their parents.

Although it is addressed primarily to parents, the statement concludes with a word of encouragement to "our homosexual brothers and sisters."

"Though at times you

may feel discouraged, hurt or angry," it says, "do not walk away from your families, from the Christian community, from all those who love you. In you God's love is revealed. You are always our children." It quotes from the first letter of John: "There is no fear in love ... perfect love drives out fear."

The statement begins with a frank discussion of the "tide of emotions" that is often unleashed when a parent first learns or suspects that a son or daughter is homosexually oriented.

It says parents may feel anger, mourning, fear, guilt, shame, parental protectiveness and pride, and even relief at knowing for certain what one has suspected.

"There are two important things to keep in mind as you try to sort out your feelings," it says. "First, listen to them. They can contain clues leading to a fuller

discovery of God's will for you. Second, because some feelings can be confusing or conflicting, it is not necessary to act upon all of them.... Do not expect that all tensions can or will be resolved."

Asking parents to keep their love for their children foremost, the statement says, "First, don't break off contact; don't reject your child. A shocking number of homosexual youth end up on the streets because of rejection by their families."

It also urges parents "to seek appropriate help for your child and yourself."

It suggests that faith, spiritual direction and church-related support groups can help parents and their children deal with issues related to homosexual orientation.

It urges parents to consider "joining a parents' support group or participating in a retreat designed for Catholic

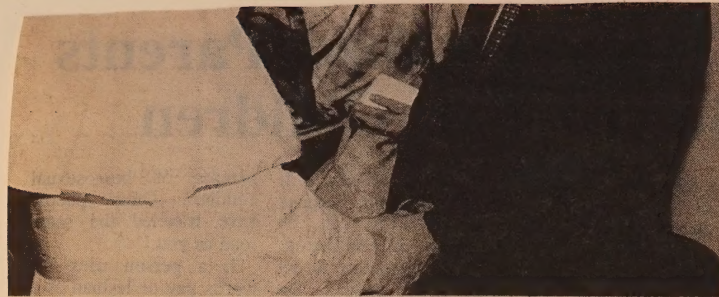
parents of homosexual children. Other people have traveled the same road as you."

If a person uses the words gay or lesbian as a self-description, the statement urges parents who consider the terms offensive "to be sensitive to how your son or daughter is using them. Language should not be a barrier to building trust and honest communication."

On adolescent homosexuality, the statement points out that "adolescence is often accompanied by anxiety or confusion about sexual identity."

"If your son or daughter is an adolescent, it is possible that he or she may be experimenting with some homosexual behaviors as part of the process of coming to terms with sexual identity," it says. "Isolated acts do not make someone homosexual."

(Continued on Page 15)



POPE GREETES GURJAL - Pope John Paul II greets Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gurjal and his wife as they arrive for a private audience Sept. 25 at the pope's summer residence in Castel Gondolfo, Italy. The prime minister was on a one-day trip to Italy. (CNS photo from Reuters)

David Haas, Rawn Harbor To Present Concert, Oct. 10

On Friday, Oct. 10, David Haas and Rawn Harbor will present a concert of contemporary liturgical music at St. Francis Xavier Church in Birmingham. The concert will begin at 7:30 p.m. Tickets will be available at the door for \$5. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Mary's House, a local shelter for homeless families.

Haas lives in St. Paul, N., and is the director of The Emmaus Center Music Department.

musician and lecturer. He has worked and studied at Furman University, Howard University, Georgetown, The Catholic University of America, and Chicago Theological Union. He is a Teaching Assistant and Director of Liturgy for the Institute for Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University in New Orleans. Harbor was a member of the music selection team for the hymnal, *Lead Me, Guide*

Me. Since 1994 he has served as director of Worship for the Diocese of Wichita, KS.

Both performers are in town to participate in the Diocesan Conference which will take place at John Carroll High School Oct. 10-11.

St. Francis Xavier Church is located at 2 Xavier Circle, across from Baptist Montclair Hospital. For more information, call 871-1153.

planning a Memorial Mass at St. Michael's Church in St. Florian on Monday, Oct. 13, at 10 a.m. A memorial service in memory of the more than 35 million aborted babies will follow at the church cemetery.

Bishop David E. Foley will be the principal celebrant of the Mass. Msgr. Philip J. Reilly, executive director and founder of the Helpers of God's Precious Infants, and Abbot Victor Clark, pastor of St. Michael's, will concelebrate. All the priests in the Northwest region of Alabama have also been invited to concelebrate the Mass.

Invitations have been extended to all 47 Knights of Columbus Councils in the State of Alabama. Each Council is invited to send two Fourth Degree representatives to serve as honor guards for the ceremony. The ladies in the Northwest Alabama Deanery will also be invited to attend. A reception will follow at the Knights of Columbus Langer Hall. Eve Ray of Oneonta will display, during the reception, 42 baby quilts made in memory of over 35 million aborted babies. She will be one of the soloists at the Mass.

Msgr. Reilly, chaplain of the Monastery of the Precious Blood in Brooklyn, will be the homilist at the Memorial Mass. He founded the Helpers of God's Precious Infants in 1989 and since that time has fine-tuned the approach and the principles of the Helpers philosophy—dependence on God. The philosophy has four basic principles:

- Give God permission to work; or don't get in God's way. It is only God who does this work and changes hearts. We are dealing with the battle of good and evil.
- Don't worry about who gets the credit. Do it for God's glory.
- Keep a sense of humor.
- Keep praying.

Prayer shows that you are taking God seriously and knowledge of His sovereignty in this battle for souls.

Due to inquiries made by various Knights of Columbus Councils, the Service Team of the Helpers in Birmingham has been working on a

Pastoral Recommendations To Parents Of Homosexuals

By Jerry Filteau

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- In a statement released Oct. 1, the U.S. bishops' Committee on Marriage and Family offered support to parents with homosexual sons or daughters and urged them to continue loving their children.

The statement, titled "Always Our Children," included a series of concrete recommendations to those parents and to church ministers.

Here is a summary of some of the committee's recommendations to parents:

- "Accept and love yourselves as parents in order to accept and love your son or daughter."

- Show the child your love, but this does not mean approving all of his or her choices. "In fact, you may need to challenge certain aspects of a lifestyle which you find objectionable."

- Urge the son or daughter to maintain or restore ties with the Catholic faith community.

- Encourage use of a spiritual director or mentor "who will offer guidance in prayer and in leading a chaste and virtuous life."

issue.

- Reach out to other parents struggling with a son or daughter's homosexuality. Make use of parish or diocesan resources that are available.

- "Remember that ... you can only be responsible for your own beliefs and actions, not those of your adult children."

- "Put your faith completely in God," who is more compassionate than any human being.

The committee urged pastors and other church ministers to:

- "Be available to parents and families who ask for your pastoral help, spiritual guidance and prayer."

- "Welcome homosexual persons into the faith community.... Avoid stereotyping and condemnations."

- Be more effective teachers and counselors by learning about homosexuality and church teaching on it.

- Speak honestly and accurately about homo-

sexuality in ways that let people know they can discuss such issues with you or among themselves.

- Keep a list of agencies, counselors and other experts available to assist homosexual people and their families. "Recommend agencies that operate in a manner consistent

with Catholic teaching."

- "Help to establish or promote existing support groups for parents and family members."

- "Learn about HIV/AIDS" and make ministry to those with HIV and their caregivers an integral part of the parish's prayer life and pastoral ministry.

Four From Diocese Will Be Invested In Equestrian Order Of Holy Sepulchre

NEW ORLEANS - Bishop John H. Ricard, recently installed as the Bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee, will head a class of 104 Catholic men and women from throughout the southeastern part of the United States,

Randolph Macon Women's College in Virginia.

Hugh S. Gainer grew up in Birmingham where he attended St. Paul's Church and elementary school. He attended John Carroll High School and the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He

Cordova, Ala., to a devout Church of Christ family. In 1947 she married James Joseph McLean of Jasper, and soon became closely associated and well acquainted with Catholicism. During Lent of 1956, she was baptized a

Knight and Lady of the Collar (very rare and limited to 12 each), Knight and Lady Grand Cross, Knight and Lady Commander With Star, Knight and Lady Commander, and Knight and Lady.

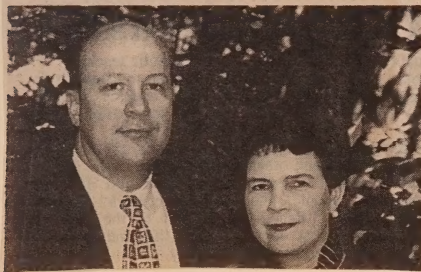
The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem is the only order of Chivalry within the Catholic Church. It traces its origins back to the era of the First Crusade when it was organized to protect the Holy Land from Moslem invaders. The year 1099 D. is accepted as the date of its foundation.

Its mission today is the maintenance of a Catholic presence in the Holy Land, and it carries out this mission through prayer and through financial assistance to church-seminaries, convents, schools, clinics and organizes in what is now Israel and Jordan.

The Southeastern eutenancy is made up of Knights and Ladies residing in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

There are nine other eutenancies in the United States, and 44 eutenancies in Europe, the New World and Australia; and others are being re-organized in the ancient nations that once lay behind the Iron Curtain.

The weekend program



Department of Communications

National Conference of Catholic Bishops / U.S. Catholic Conference

ALWAYS OUR CHILDREN:

A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministers

A Statement of the Bishops' Committee on Marriage and Family National Conference of Catholic Bishops

Always Our Children: A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministers is a statement of the NCCB Committee on Marriage and Family. It was prepared in the Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women, and Youth under the supervision of the above committee. Publication was approved by the Administrative Committee on September 10, 1997. The statement is further authorized for publication by the undersigned.

Monsignor Dennis M. Schnurr
General Secretary
NCCB/USCC

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PREFACE

The purpose of this pastoral message is to reach out to parents who are trying to cope with the discovery of homosexuality in a child, who is an adolescent or an adult. It urges families to draw upon the reservoirs of faith, hope, and love as they face uncharted futures. It asks them to recognize that the Church offers enormous spiritual resources to strengthen and support them at this moment in their family's life and in the days to come.

This message draws upon the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the teaching of Pope John Paul II, statements of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and of our own Episcopal Conference. The message is not a treatise on homosexuality. It is not a systematic presentation of the Church's moral teaching. It does not break any new ground theologically. Rather, relying on the Church's teaching as well as on our own pastoral experience, we intend to speak words of faith, hope, and love to parents who need the Church's loving presence at a time which may be one of the most challenging in their lives.

We also want to be helpful to priests and pastoral ministers who often are the first ones parents or their children approach with their struggles and anxieties.

In recent years we have tried to reach out to families in difficult circumstances. Our initiatives took the form of short statements, like this one, which were addressed to people who thought they were beyond the Church's circle of care. *Always Our Children* follows in the same tradition as these other pastoral statements.

This message is not intended for advocacy purposes or to serve a particular agenda. It is not to be understood as an endorsement of what some call a "homosexual lifestyle."

Always Our Children is an outstretched hand of the Bishops' Committee on Marriage and Family to parents and other family members offering them a fresh look at the grace present in family life and the unfailing mercy of Christ our Lord.

An even more generous, intelligent and prudent pastoral commitment, modeled on the Good Shepherd, is called for in cases of families which, often independently of their own wishes and through pressures of various other kinds, find themselves faced by situations which are objectively difficult.

Pope John Paul II
***On the Family*, 1981, n. 77**

A Critical Moment, A Time of Grace

As you begin to read this message you may feel your life is in turmoil. You and your family might be faced with one of the difficult situations of which our Holy Father speaks:

- You think your adolescent child is experiencing a same-sex attraction and/or you observe attitudes and behaviors that you find confusing or upsetting or with which you disagree.
- Your son or daughter has made it known that he or she has a homosexual orientation.
- You experience a tension between loving your child as God's precious creation and not wanting to endorse any behavior you know the Church teaches is wrong.

You need not face this painful time alone, without human assistance or God's grace. The Church can be an instrument of both help and healing. This is why we bishops, as pastors and teachers, write to you.

In this pastoral message, we draw upon the gift of faith as well as the sound teaching and pastoral practice of the Church in order to offer loving support, reliable guidance, and recommendations for ministries suited to your needs and those of your child. Our message speaks of accepting yourself, your beliefs and values, your questions and all you may be struggling with at the moment; accepting and loving your child as a gift of God;

and accepting the full truth of God's revelation about the dignity of the human person and the meaning of human sexuality. Within the Catholic moral vision there is no contradiction among these levels of acceptance, for truth and love are not opposed. They are inseparably joined and rooted in one person, Jesus Christ, who reveals God to be ultimate truth and saving love.

We address our message also to the wider church community, and especially to priests and other pastoral ministers, asking that our words be translated into attitudes and actions which follow the way of love, as Christ has taught. It is through the community of his faithful, that Jesus offers you hope, help, and healing so your whole family might continue to grow into the intimate community of life and love which God intends.

Accepting Yourself

Because some of you might be swept up in a tide of emotions, we focus first on feelings. Although the gift of human sexuality can be a great mystery at times, the Church's teaching on homosexuality is clear. However, because the terms of that teaching have now become very personal in regard to your son or daughter, you may feel confused and conflicted.

Possibly you are experiencing many different emotions, all in varying degrees, such as:

RELIEF: Perhaps you had sensed for some time that your son or daughter was different in some way. Now he or she has come to you and has entrusted something very significant. It may be that other siblings learned of this before you did, and were reluctant to tell you. Regardless, though, a burden has been lifted. Acknowledge the possibility that your child has told you this not to hurt you or create distance, but out of love and trust and with a desire for honesty, intimacy, and closer communication.

ANGER: You may be feeling deceived or manipulated by your son or daughter. You could be angry with your spouse, blaming him or her for "making the child this way" -- especially if there has been a difficult parent-child relationship. You might be angry with yourself for not recognizing indications of homosexuality. You could be feeling disappointment, along with anger, if family members, and sometimes even siblings, are rejecting their homosexual brother or sister. It is just as possible to feel angry if family members or friends seem overly accepting and encouraging of homosexuality. Also -- and not to be discounted -- is a possible anger with God that all this is happening.

MOURNING: You may now feel that your child is not exactly the same individual you once thought you knew. You envision that your son or daughter may never give you grandchildren. These lost expectations as well as the fact that homosexual persons often encounter discrimination and open hostility can cause you great sadness.

FEAR: You may fear for your child's physical safety and general welfare in the face of prejudice against homosexual people. In particular, you may be afraid that others in your community might exclude or treat your child or your family with contempt. The fear of your child contracting HIV/AIDS or another sexually transmitted disease is serious and ever-present. If your child is distraught, you may be concerned about attempted suicide.

GUILT, SHAME, AND LONELINESS: "If only we had...or had not..." are words with

which parents can torture themselves at this time. Regrets and disappointments rise up like ghosts from the past. A sense of failure can lead you into a valley of shame which, in turn, can isolate you from your children, your family, and other communities of support.

PARENTAL PROTECTIVENESS AND PRIDE: Homosexual persons often experience discrimination and acts of violence in our society. As a parent, you naturally want to shield your children from harm, regardless of their age. You may still insist: "You are always my child; nothing can ever change that. You are also a child of God, gifted and called for a purpose in God's design."

There are two important things to keep in mind as you try to sort out your feelings. First, listen to them. They can contain clues leading to a fuller discovery of God's will for you. Second, because some feelings can be confusing or conflicting, it is not necessary to act upon all of them. Acknowledging them may be sufficient, but it may also be necessary to talk about your feelings. Do not expect that all tensions can or will be resolved. The Christian life is a journey marked by perseverance and prayer. It is a path leading from where we are to where we know God is calling us.

Accepting Your Child

How can you best express your love -- itself a reflection of God's unconditional love -- for your child? At least two things are necessary.

First, don't break off contact; don't reject your child. A shocking number of homosexual youth end up on the streets because of rejection by their families. This, and other external pressures, can place young people at greater risk of self-destructive behaviors, like substance abuse, and suicide.

Your child may need you and the family now more than ever. He or she is still the same person. This child, who has always been God's gift to you, may now be the cause of another gift: your family becoming more honest, respectful, and supportive. Yes, your love can be tested by this reality, but it can also grow stronger through your struggle to respond lovingly.

The second way to communicate love is to seek appropriate help for your child and for yourself. If your son or daughter is an adolescent, it is possible that he or she may be experimenting with some homosexual behaviors as part of the process of coming to terms with sexual identity. Isolated acts do not make someone homosexual. Adolescence is often accompanied by anxiety or confusion about sexual identity. Sometimes the best approach may be a "wait and see" attitude, while you try to maintain a trusting relationship and provide various kinds of support, information, and encouragement.

In many cases, it may be appropriate and necessary that your child receive professional help, including counseling and spiritual direction. It is important, of course, that he or she receive such guidance willingly. Look for a therapist who has an appreciation of religious values and who understands the complex nature of sexuality. Such a person should be experienced at helping people discern the meaning of early sexual behaviors, sexual attractions, and sexual fantasies in ways that lead to more clarity and self-identity. In the course of this, however, it is essential for you to remain open to the possibility

that your son or daughter is struggling to understand and accept a basic homosexual orientation.

The meaning and implications of the term, homosexual orientation, are not universally agreed upon. Church teaching acknowledges a distinction between a homosexual "tendency" which proves to be "transitory" and "homosexuals who are definitively such because of some kind of innate instinct" (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics*, 1975, n.8).

In light of this possibility, therefore, it seems appropriate to understand sexual orientation (heterosexual or homosexual) as a fundamental dimension of one's personality and to recognize its relative stability in a person. A homosexual orientation produces a stronger emotional and sexual attraction toward individuals of the same sex, rather than toward those of the opposite sex. It does not totally rule out interest in, care for and attraction toward members of the opposite sex. Having a homosexual orientation does not necessarily mean a person will engage in homosexual activity.

There seems to be no single cause of a homosexual orientation. A common opinion of experts is that there are multiple factors -- genetic, hormonal, psychological -- that may give rise to it. Generally, homosexual orientation is experienced as a given, not as something freely chosen. By itself, therefore, a homosexual orientation cannot be considered sinful, for morality presumes the freedom to choose.

Some homosexual persons want to be known publicly as gay or lesbian. These terms often express a person's level of self-awareness and self-acceptance within society. Though you might find the terms offensive because of political or social connotations, it is necessary to be sensitive to how your son or daughter is using them. Language should not be a barrier to building trust and honest communication.

You can help a homosexual person in two general ways. First, encourage him or her to cooperate with God's grace in order to live a chaste life. Second, concentrate on the person, not on the homosexual orientation itself. This implies respecting a person's freedom to choose or refuse therapy directed toward changing a homosexual orientation. Given the present state of medical and psychological knowledge, there is no guarantee that such therapy will succeed. Thus, there may be no obligation to undertake it, though some may find it helpful.

All in all, it is essential to recall one basic truth. God loves every person as a unique individual. Sexual identity helps to define the unique persons we are. One component of our sexual identity is sexual orientation. Thus, our total personhood is more encompassing than sexual orientation. Human beings see the appearance, but the Lord looks into the heart (cf. I Samuel 16:7).

God does not love someone any less simply because he or she is homosexual. God's love is always and everywhere offered to those who are open to receiving it. St. Paul's words offer great hope:

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ

Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39).

Accepting God's Plan and the Church's Ministry

For the Christian believer, an acceptance of self and of one's homosexual child must take place within the larger context of accepting divinely revealed truth about the dignity and destiny of human persons. It is the Church's responsibility to believe and teach this truth, presenting it as a comprehensive moral vision and applying this vision in particular situations through its pastoral ministries. We present the main points of that moral teaching here.

Every person has an inherent dignity because he or she is created in God's image.

A deep respect for the total person leads the Church to hold and teach that sexuality is a gift of God. Being created a male or a female person is an essential part of the divine plan, for it is their sexuality -- a mysterious blend of spirit and body -- that allows human beings to share in God's own creative love and life. "Everyone...should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2333).

Like all gifts from God, the power and freedom of sexuality can be channeled toward good or evil. Everyone -- the homosexual and the heterosexual person -- is called to personal maturity and responsibility. With the help of God's grace, everyone is called to practice the virtue of chastity in relationships. Chastity means integrating one's thoughts, feelings, and actions, in the area of human sexuality, in a way that values and respects one's own dignity and that of others. It is "the spiritual power which frees love from selfishness and aggression" (Pontifical Council for the Family, *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, 1996, n.16).

Christ summons all his followers -- whether they are married or living a single celibate life -- to a higher standard of loving. This includes not only fidelity, forgiveness, hope, perseverance, and sacrifice, but also chastity which is expressed in modesty and self-control. The chaste life is possible, though not always easy, for it involves a continual effort to turn toward God and away from sin, especially with the strength of the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist. Indeed God expects everyone to strive for the perfection of love, but to achieve it gradually through stages of moral growth (cf. John Paul II, *On the Family*, 1981, n. 34). To keep our feet on the path of conversion, God's grace is available to and sufficient for everyone open to receiving it.

To live and love chastely is to understand that "only within marriage does sexual intercourse fully symbolize the Creator's dual design, as an act of covenant love, with the potential of co-creating new human life" (U.S. Catholic Conference, *Human Sexuality: A Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning*, 1991, p. 55). This is a fundamental teaching of our Church about sexuality, rooted in the biblical account of man and woman created in the image of God and made for union with one another (Genesis 2-3).

Two conclusions follow. First, it is God's plan that sexual intercourse occur only within marriage between a man and a woman. Second, every act of intercourse must be open to the possible creation of new human life. Homosexual intercourse cannot fulfill these two

conditions. Therefore, the Church teaches that homogenital behavior is objectively immoral, while making the important distinction between this behavior and a homosexual orientation, which is not immoral in itself.

It is also important to recognize that neither a homosexual orientation, nor a heterosexual one, leads inevitably to sexual activity. One's total personhood is not reducible to sexual orientation or behavior.

Respect for the God-given dignity of all persons means the recognition of human rights and responsibilities. The teaching of the Church makes it clear that the fundamental human rights of homosexual persons must be defended and that all of us must strive to eliminate any form of injustice, oppression, or violence against them (cf. *The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons*, 1986, n.10).

It is not sufficient only to avoid unjust discrimination. Homosexual persons "must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2358). They, as is true of every human being, need to be nourished at many different levels simultaneously.

This includes friendship, which is a way of loving and is essential to healthy human development, as well as one of the richest possible human experiences. Friendship can and does thrive outside of genital sexual involvement.

The Christian community should offer its homosexual sisters and brothers understanding and pastoral care. More than twenty years ago we bishops stated that "Homosexuals...should have an active role in the Christian community" (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *To Live in Christ Jesus: A Pastoral Reflection on the Moral Life*, 1976, p.19). What does this mean in practice? It means that all homosexual persons have a right to be welcomed into the community, to hear the word of God, and to receive pastoral care. Homosexual persons who are living chaste lives should have opportunities to lead and serve the community. However, the Church has the right to deny public roles of service and leadership to persons, whether homosexual or heterosexual, whose public behavior openly violates its teachings.

The Church recognizes the importance and urgency of ministering to persons with HIV/AIDS. Though HIV/AIDS is an epidemic affecting the whole human race, not just homosexual persons, it has had a devastating effect upon them and has brought great sorrow to many parents, families and friends.

Without condoning self-destructive behavior or denying personal responsibility, we reject the idea that HIV/AIDS is a direct punishment from God. Furthermore:

Persons with AIDS are not distant, unfamiliar people, the objects of our mingled pity and aversion. We must keep them present to our consciousness as individuals and a community, and embrace them with unconditional love.... Compassion--love--toward persons infected with HIV is the only authentic Gospel response (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Called to Compassion and Responsibility: A Response to the HIV/AIDS Crisis*, 1989).

Nothing in the Bible or in Catholic teaching can be used to justify prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes and behaviors. We reiterate here what we said in an earlier statement:

We call on all Christians and citizens of good will to confront their own fears about homosexuality and to curb the humor and discrimination that offend homosexual persons. We understand that having a homosexual orientation brings with it enough anxiety, pain and issues related to self-acceptance without society bringing additional prejudicial treatment (*Human Sexuality: A Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning*, 1991, p.55).

Pastoral Recommendations

With a view toward overcoming the isolation that you or your son or daughter may be experiencing, we offer these recommendations to you as well as to priests and pastoral ministers.

To parents:

1. Accept and love yourselves as parents in order to accept and love your son or daughter. Do not blame yourselves for a homosexual orientation in your child.
2. Do everything possible to continue demonstrating love for your child. However, accepting his or her homosexual orientation does not have to include approving all related attitudes and behavioral choices. In fact, you may need to challenge certain aspects of a lifestyle which you find objectionable.
3. Urge your son or daughter to stay joined to the Catholic faith community. If they have left the Church, urge them to return and be reconciled to the community, especially in the Sacrament of Penance.
4. Recommend that your son or daughter find a spiritual director/mentor who will offer guidance in prayer and in leading a chaste and virtuous life.
5. Seek help for yourself, perhaps in the form of counseling or spiritual direction, as you strive for understanding, acceptance and inner peace. Also, consider joining a parents' support group or participating in a retreat designed for Catholic parents of homosexual children. Other people have traveled the same road as you, but may have journeyed even further. They can share effective ways of handling delicate family situations such as how to tell family members and friends about your child, how to explain homosexuality to younger children, how to relate to your son or daughter's friends in a Christian way.
6. Reach out in love and service to other parents who may be struggling with a son or daughter's homosexuality. Contact your parish about organizing a parents' support group. Your diocesan

Family Ministry Office, Catholic Charities, or a special diocesan ministry to gay and lesbian persons may be able to offer assistance.

7. As you take advantage of opportunities for education and support, remember that you can only change yourself; you can only be responsible for your own beliefs and actions, not those of your adult children.
8. Put your faith completely in God who is more powerful, more compassionate and more forgiving than we are or ever could be.

To church ministers:

1. Be available to parents and families who ask for your pastoral help, spiritual guidance and prayer.
2. Welcome homosexual persons into the faith community. Seek out those on the margins. Avoid stereotyping and condemnations. Strive first to listen. Do not presume that all homosexual persons are sexually active.
3. Learn about homosexuality and church teaching so that your preaching, teaching, and counseling will be informed and effective.
4. Use the words "homosexual", "gay", "lesbian" in honest and accurate ways, especially from the pulpit. In various and subtle ways you can give people "permission" to talk about homosexual issues among themselves and let them know that you're also willing to talk with them.
5. Maintain a list of agencies, community groups, and counselors or other experts to whom you can refer homosexual persons or their parents and family members when they ask you for specialized assistance. Recommend agencies that operate in a manner consistent with Catholic teaching.
6. Help to establish or promote existing support groups for parents and family members.
7. Learn about HIV/AIDS so you will be more informed and compassionate in your ministry. Include prayers in the liturgy for those living with HIV/AIDS, their caregivers, those who have died, and their families, companions and friends. A special Mass for healing and anointing of the sick might be connected with World AIDS Awareness Day (December 1) or with a local AIDS awareness program.)

Conclusion

For St. Paul love is the greatest of spiritual gifts. St. John considers love to be the most certain sign of God's presence. Jesus proposes it as the basis of his two great commandments which fulfill all the law and the prophets.

Love, too, is the continuing story of every family's life. Love can be shared, nurtured, rejected, and sometimes lost. To follow Christ's way of love is the challenge before every family today. Your family now has an added opportunity to share love and to

accept love. Our church communities are likewise called to an exemplary standard of love and justice. Our homosexual sisters and brothers -- indeed, all people -- are summoned into responsible ways of loving.

To our homosexual brothers and sisters we offer a concluding word. This message has been an outstretched hand to your parents and families inviting them to accept God's grace present in their lives now and to trust in the unfailing mercy of Jesus our Lord. Now we stretch out our hands and invite you to do the same. We are called to become one body, one spirit in Christ. We need one another if we are to "...grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, with the proper functioning of each part, brings about the body's growth and builds itself up in love" (Ephesians, 4:15-16).

Though at times you may feel discouraged, hurt or angry, do not walk away from your families, from the Christian community, from all those who love you. In you God's love is revealed. You are always our children.

"There is no fear in love...perfect love drives out fear" (1 John 4:18).

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| F | A | H | L | G | R | E | N |

Dear Friend:

Miramax Films cordially invites you and a guest to an advance screening of Antonia Bird's **PRIEST**.

Thursday, March 30, 1995

7:30 PM

Carmike Collonade

3427 Collonade Parkway

Winner of the 1994 LaBatt's People's Choice Award at the Toronto Film Festival, **PRIEST** received standing ovations at the 1995 Sundance Film Festival, where it had its U.S. premiere.

PRIEST is a vivid and uncompromising journey into the soul of a Catholic priest, Father Greg Pilkington, (Linus Roache), who suddenly has his world turned upside down when he is forced to keep a tragic secret told to him by a young parishioner in the sanctity of the confessional. He must choose between his faith and exposing the truth, and his world becomes one of lies and betrayal as he proceeds to confront his own hidden demons.

PRIEST also stars Tom Wilkinson and Cathy Tyson.

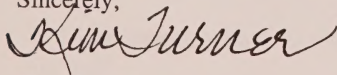
PRIEST follows the success of Director Antonia Bird's first feature, **SAFE**, which won the Best New Director award at the Edinburg International Film Festival and the Hitchcock prize at the Dinard Film Festival, as well as the 1994 BAFTA Award for Best Single Drama.

PRIEST, a Miramax Films release, opens nationally in April 1995.

Running time: 97 minutes

There will be a panel discussion and question and answer directly following the screening. We look forward to seeing you at the screening of **PRIEST** on Thursday, March 30.
Thank you and kindest regards.

Sincerely,



Kim Turner

Sr. Director of Publicity/Promotions

***This ticket admits two.**

MIRAMAX MEMO

375 Greenwich Street, 4th floor, New York, NY 10013

Telephone: 212.941.23847

Fax: 212.941.2053

DATE: March 6, 1995

TO: RJ

FROM: DDa/GG

RE: "PRIEST" forum debates

CC: HW, BW, MG, MGr, Publicity NY/LA

Please use the following questions for the moderators at your forum debates for **Priest**:

1. I know there were several issues illustrated in "Priest," I would like to go around the room and get each person's immediate gut reaction.

~~2. We handed out an article from the Boston Herald regarding the diminishing number of priests in the Catholic Church in large part due to the celibacy issue again illustrated in the film. What are your feelings?~~

3. Does "Priest" exemplify the kind of discussion that needs to take place now since it has been said that the Catholic Church is facing its most challenging times since the 4th Century?

4. Do you see this film as highly controversial in that it challenges the hierarchy of the Catholic Church?

5. What do you see as some of the issues?

6. Are the issues raised in the film the kind of issues which you and your peers can relate to?

7. Does anyone have questions or issues with the film that have not been raised?



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CONFESSIO NAL

Peter Broderick on Antonia Bird's Priest

Antonia Bird has arrived and brought with her an urgently needed brand of passionate filmmaking. Her first feature, *Priest*, is a model of what filmmakers concerned with social issues can achieve in the '90s. The film vividly presents complex issues and avoids offering simple-minded solutions; it mixes raw emotions and complicated ideas in a way that provokes and moves viewers.

Priest arrived unheralded at the Toronto Film Festival and took it by storm. Both screenings ended in tumultuous standing ovations, and Miramax circled in for the deal. But the remarkable response *Priest* received did not change Bird's life because she was already rising a career whirlwind before the film's Toronto premiere. Little more than a year earlier, Bird's first movie — the 65-minute *Safe* — won the ChaoLin Award for Best First Film at the 1993 Edinburgh Film Festival. In the following 12 months, she shot two features (*Priest* in England and *Mad Love* in the U.S.), finished one, and began post-producing the other. At the 1994 Edinburgh Film Festival, *Priest* was shown as a work-in-progress, and won the Michael Powell Award for Best British Feature Film.

Bird has consistently managed to seize the opportunities presented to her and make the most of them. Sitting in a pub one night, she revealed her filmmaking ambitions to a man who laughed in her face at the idea of a woman director. By the age of 22, she was directing the work of new playwrights at the Royal Court Theater in London. After much success there and at other theaters, Bird had her first chance to direct for television. "I found that my forte was directing for the camera," she remembered. Bird then developed her craft by directing quality episodic television.

When Bird eventually was given the chance to direct her first film for television, she made *Safe*, a gripping tale of homeless teenagers trying to survive on the streets of London.

Safe's executive producer, George Faber, was so impressed by what he saw in the cutting room that he asked Bird to direct *Priest*. He sent her the script the next day; she read it that evening, and called him at 9:30 the next morning to say yes. *Safe* was finished in August 1993, and preproduction on *Priest* began the following month. *Priest* was shot in 35 days from mid-November through early January (with time off for the holidays). While Bird was in post-production on *Priest* in London, Touchstone asked her to direct *Mad Love*, which she describes as a "very emotional and very American alternative love story for the '90s." She began preproduction on *Mad Love* while she was still in post on *Priest*.

Originally designed as a four-part mini series which the BBC commissioned and then decided not to make, *Priest* takes a provocative look at the Catholic Church. It was written by Jimmy McGovern, a lifelong Catholic who like many oth-

ers, combines an underlying faith with a sharp critique of the Church's sins as an institution. The film begins with the unforgettable image of a priest (who has been fired after 40 years), taking a massive crucifix out of a church, charging the bishop's mansion, and throwing the crucifix through his window. The film takes on two taboos — homosexuality in the priesthood, and incest — weaving them into the fabric of its characters' lives. It focuses on a

young, idealistic priest who is thrust into a complex world where his doctrinaire views simply don't work. These beliefs make him incapable of dealing with the real evil he encounters in his new parish, or coming to terms with his own homosexuality. *Priest* shows how a rigid Church hierarchy can exacerbate rather than ameliorate the most urgent personal problems of its priests and parishioners.

Making *Safe*, *Priest*, and *Mad Love* back to back would have been difficult for even a veteran director since

the production process on each film "was totally and completely different." *Safe* started as a "very loose script with characters based on real people." The story was created and shaped during shooting, which was a very creative and collaborative process for the cast and crew. *Priest* began as "the most perfect script of a film I've read." During production "we were fed 100% by the script but still had the freedom to make it our own." *Mad Love* introduced Bird to the studio system. She found the studio approach to the scripting process "pretty scary." "I don't think you can produce a good script with nine or ten people, and I think the script suffered." Fortunately Bird was able to help the film regain the spirit of the original script in post.

One contrast Bird observed between Hollywood and Europe is that "in Europe you get what you want by being responsible and polite. It is the reverse in the U.S. You stomp your foot and shout 'I want' like a little kid, rather than saying 'it would be really good for the film.'" But in most other respects, Bird found the process of "working for Touchstone not that different from working for the BBC."

Despite differences in production methods and subject matter, Bird's films are linked by their political passion and emotional impact. She explained, "I'm an egalitarian because I believe in equality for everybody. I'm interested in the inhuman way vast numbers of people are treated... I want to make political films, but ones that entertain, and will be seen and enjoyed by millions of working people, and may give them hope and energy." She is not interested in making "art-house films for the middle-class." Ken Leach is my hero and role model for subject matter. Martin Scorsese is my hero and role model for filmmaking. I want to be a combination. What could be better? ▼



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version of Anna Devereaux Smith's *Twilight*; L.A., 1992 for American Playhouse • Fredrick

Antonia Bird is about to storm cinemas with her new film *Priest*. She talks to Sheila Johnston

Woman on the verge

Over the past year I've seen an exceptionally large number of rotten movies by first-time British directors. *Funny Man*, *White Angel*, *Shopping*, *Beyond Bedlam*, *Staggered*, *Deadly Advice*... the turkeys kept right on coming: films with excellent production values and experienced crews, but also poorly crafted scripts and, too often, nothing much to say. That's why, asked to pick a Face to Watch in 1995, I've chosen Antonia Bird.

The word that occurs most often in her conversation is "passionate". Not passionate about movies (though she is that, too), but passionate about what she wants to say. She's not a Quentin Tarantino-style buff (QT will have a lot of third-rate wannabes to answer for in years to come) whose entire work seems like ironic quotes from other movies. Her films have urgent, contemporary subjects.

The first, *Safe*, was a Dantesque journey through the underworld of the young homeless. Her next one, *Priest*, which portrays a priest struggling with his gay sexuality, presaged the current crisis wracking the Catholic clergy. "Both *Safe* and *Priest* immediately hit me in the gut," Bird says. "They concern things I personally feel passionate about and think we should all be debating."

If you reckon all this sounds worthy-but-dull, you would be much mistaken. As one would expect, Bird cites Ken Loach as a major influence, but also Martin Scorsese. Her film-making style carries a definite American inflection, with its speed, energy and kinetic, ever-moving camera: "You make films like you're a person, unfortunately, so mine are a bit out of control sometimes."

They keep storming festivals: Best New Director in Edinburgh for *Safe*, plus the Hitchcock Prize in Dinard and a British Academy Award. *Priest* was named Best British Feature in Edinburgh last summer and, in Toronto, won the People's Choice Award. It's not known yet if Bird can draw the floating punters outside this rarified festival circuit: *Safe* went straight to television despite critical acclaim. But *Priest* will hit cinemas internationally.

"It's gonna go all over the world, except Japan and Argentina, where the distributors said they would be either shot or put in prison if they showed it." In America, it has been picked up by Miramax, a hard-



WATCH THIS FACE...

IN THE CINEMA

nosed distribution company which made small Britpix like *The Crying Game* and *Enchanted April* into sizeable hits. It opens in Britain in March.

Bird contemplates her biographical notes in the press pack a little gloomily: "They make me sound like I'm 55." She's a good deal younger, though it would also be fair to say she has been round the block a few times. She has a solid grounding in theatre and television and, unlike other directors who rushed into celluloid before they were good and ready, she took time to develop a mature vision and technique.

"I was about 27 when I started directing for the theatre. I was a resident director at the Royal Court Theatre. Upstairs for five years, where I did plays by Trevor Griffiths, Hanif Kureishi,

Jim Cartwright; good British writers. I also did something called *Submariners* by a new writer. The BBC bought it for a *Play for Today*, and that's how I moved into television.

"I thought: 'I need to learn this craft'; there's no way you can shift straight from a *Play for Today* to major film work. So I joined *EastEnders* in its first year, shooting on video with multiple cameras. We worked very fast, nearly live: we would shoot two episodes over two evenings. I spent six months there and thought, 'I'd better stop doing this, fast.' Then I worked on *Casualty*. In the early 1990s, she worked on more prestigious stuff: *The Men's Room*, *A Masculine Ending*, *Inspector Morse*—all shot for TV, but on film. "I had really found my medium."

"I left the theatre because I

wanted to reach a wider audience, and I felt we were preaching to the converted. Also, I adore working with actors and I found the camera was able to get into their souls. You can't do that in the theatre because you have to demonstrate in such a big physical way." However, one thing Bird has retained from the theatre, and which also sets her apart from many new British directors, is a firm sense of the importance of the script. *Priest* was written by Jimmy McGovern, whose work includes the much-praised *Cracker* series.

She is part of an elite corps of female directors, along with Beeban Kidron and Gurindha Chadha: a pitifully small club, because we still have, compared with other countries, a terrible track record in putting women behind the camera. "We've had

very few role models, whereas women started directing features much earlier in America. And on a daily working basis there's more sexism in Britain. When I walk on to a set for the first time, I hear 'Oh blimey, it's a woman then, bollocks.' Always, for a large proportion of the crew, I'm the first woman director they've ever worked with, and it's a thing, an issue. In America they're much more used to it."

Bird has spent the last year in Seattle making *Mad Love* with Drew Barrymore: she has a three-picture contact with the Disney subsidiary Touchstone, which wooed her after seeing *Safe*. "When I talk to other British people in Hollywood, the thing we naturally gravitate to is: How can we get American budgets for British films? *Safe* cost £500,000. And *Priest* cost just

over £1m. *Mad Love* cost \$13m. If I'd had \$13m to make *Priest* it would compete in the marketplace with any top-quality American movie."

Fortunately for us, this doesn't mean she's off in a cloud of dust for the foreseeable future. "At some point before I die, I am supposed to make another two films for Touchstone: there's no time limit. And I can take projects to them: I hope to do something generated here with them as producers. There's a little bit of success in my life at the moment. I'd like to cash in on that and make a film fast and passionately about a subject I really want to do, and that maybe at other times no one would give me the money for. What drives me as a director is the society I come from. I'm too old to become an American."

Is it a Bird?

Vicki Reid

AT LEAST one person should have been delighted by the latest revelations about homosexuality in the priesthood. There's a lot of it about. Two weeks ago, gay activist Peter Tatchell "outed" 10 Anglican bishops; in September, it emerged that the Bishop of Durham has a past conviction for gross indecency, while the furore over the delayed extradition of Father Brendan Smyth, convicted of paedophilia, brought down the Irish government earlier this month.

You couldn't have missed it, unless you had spent the past few months hitchhiking in the Himalayas. Or locked away in an editing suite in L.A. Antonia Bird, working on her next film, was completely unaware of these unholy goings-on. Which is charming, seeing as her film, *Priest* (due out early next year), is all about a gay Catholic priest struggling with the church's view that homosexuality is the work of the devil. Bird declares herself fascinated by the turn of events, and pleased by the irony of it all.

Priest tackles the alienation, guilt and bitter struggle with his falling faith that assails Father Greg, and the moral outrage of his none-too-pure parishioners when he is convicted of indecency. "I wanted to make a film that exposes unjust prejudice and makes people think—God, how absurd," Bird says.

The script is by Jimmy McGovern (Brookside, Cracker) and its humour and compassion soften Bird's overtly political subject matter. As she explains: "I'm a huge believer in co-operative living, looking after each other as human beings. People cannot operate in vacuums. There's a lack of community spirit in the world."

Bird was initially ambivalent about the notion of clerical celibacy. "I've spoken to a lot of priests and I now believe the rules of celibacy are absurd. If a priest has to deny a basic human function, then half his energy is going in the wrong direction. And the loneliness must be appalling."

Isolation, the bleak side of human relationships and the need for understanding are familiar themes in Bird's work. Her first film, the award-winning *Safe*, exposed the plight of the young homeless. It confronted the anger and pain associated with abandonment and drug and sexual abuse. Audiences were shocked; Bird is glad. "I want my work to scream about injustice, inequality and inhumanity."

"Obviously my personal politics



Making movies... Above, Antonia Bird; left, Linus Roache as Father Greg, the gay priest struggling with his falling faith

PHOTOGRAPH: NICK WALL



Casualty) before tackling film. "For me, the joy of film is being able to get right inside someone's soul—you can come up so close, you can see into their minds. The first time I did a close-up, I was in ecstasy."

Bird is in ecstasy all over again after her nomination for an award to be given tomorrow by Carlton and Women in Film and Television—a support and training body set up in 1990 to help women in the business.

Bird admits that working in an industry still dominated by men can be a lonely experience. "I admire any woman making a film because I know just how bloody difficult it is. Quite often you're the only woman out there apart from the actresses, and they look to you for support."

"We know men and women speak different languages, so their interpretation of a piece of material will not be the same. I'm editing my latest film (*Mad Love* with Drew Barrymore) with a man, and his take on scenes is completely different. I see them from a woman's point of view, so subconsciously I tend to raise the relevance of the woman's role."

Mad Love, financed by an American company and consequently filmed in America, is the reason Bird has not set foot on English soil for so many months. The film focuses on soul-searching by disaffected youth: "It is aimed very much at people in their late teens and early twenties."

"I'm going for things that I would like to be seen by the widest audience possible. When I made *Safe*, I meant for every middle-class person in the world to see it and feel guilty. Now I've made *Priest*, I mean for everybody in the world to see that film and think about their own intolerance."

Priest's success will certainly be boosted by the recent scandals in the church. But when the media tire of the misdeeds of the clergy, the message, Bird hopes, will linger.

are going to shape the subject matter of my films, but psychologically I operate from a high octane emotional state; it's no accident that this comes through on celluloid."

No prizes for guessing that Bird cites Ken Loach as the director who has had the most direct influence on her work: "For his love of ordinary working-class people, warts and all." The latest hope for British screen in fact has a background in theatre. She was an only child, "persecuted at school because my father was an actor and all the other kids had real jobs." While her father struggled to get work, Bird's mother had to earn enough for the whole family, doing everything from waitressing to cleaning to market research.

Watching her father's bitter struggle, Bird believes, prepared her for working with actors: "I am able to establish a high level of trust." On leaving school at 16, she joined a company in Coventry for 18 months, before turning her attention to directing. After four years as resident director at the Royal Court, she moved into television (*EastEnders*,

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ROBIN JONAS

Regional Publicity and Promotions

Ext. 3925

DATE: 23 February
TO: Field Agencies
RE: **PRIEST/Boston Globe piece**

.....

Attached please find a great piece on married priests in today's Boston Globe. It dips right into the issues we have been discussing and those presented in **PRIEST**.

Please read the piece, it is very educational! Also, I am following up on the national organizations which were mentioned in the article, I will let you know what I find out.



Living Arts

THE BOSTON GLOBE • THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1995

MARRIED PRIESTS RECLAIM THEIR CALLING

Unsanctioned by church,
they aid Catholics in need

By William A. Davis
GLOBE STAFF

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But when the Manseaus, who now have three grown-up children, celebrated their silver wedding anniversary, hardly anybody noticed except family and friends. "We had a nice party in the Irish-American Club in Billerica," says William Manseau, "and the guests included 10 other married priests and their wives."

Manseau, a director of a counseling service in Nashua, is the Northeastern regional coordinator for Corpus, the national association for a married Catholic priesthood. He is representative of a growing number of married priests taking an active but unsanctioned role in religious life, often celebrating Masses in private homes or nursing facilities, giving communion to shut-ins and presiding at weddings.

Many Catholics approve of married priests performing such services but their church does not. The institutional church regards their actions as clear violations of church law and often spiritually invalid as well. Marriages with

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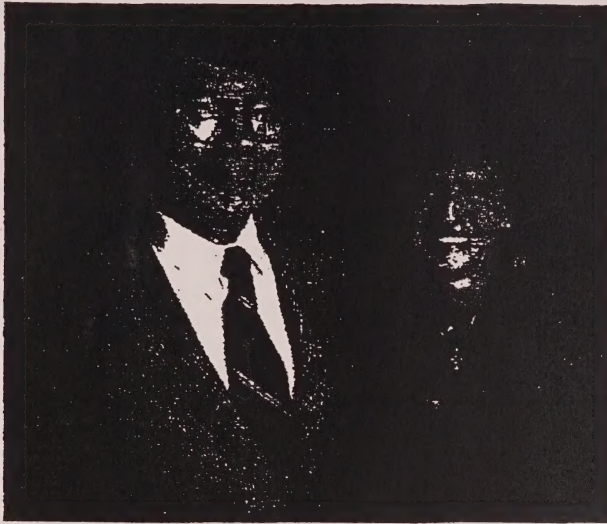
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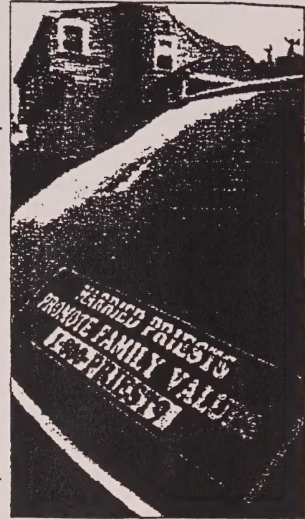
GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / TOM LANDERS

THE BOSTON GLOBE • THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1995

Married priests follow their hearts,



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GLOBE STAFF PHOTOS / JIM DAVIS

The Manseans let their car reflect their stance.

not church authorities

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■ PRIESTS

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But Manseau expects the church's stance to change. "I believe that we'll see a married Roman Catholic clergy in my lifetime: The priest shortage is a driving force for change, it's making people take responsibility for their faith life at the grass-roots level."

One of the lay people taking a grass-roots approach to solving the priest shortage is Louise Haggett of Framingham, who has made eliminating the celibacy requirement for priests a personal crusade. Haggett is founder of Celibacy Is the Issue and runs a married priest referral service called Rent-A-Priest. The name is meant to be provocative, not descriptive, Haggett says, and the service is free.

Rent-A-Priest puts lay people in need of priestly services in touch with married priests willing to help. "I'm trying to get all those married priests out of the closet and into the places where they're needed," says Haggett, who first became interested in the celibacy issue and the priest shortage when she was unable to find a priest to say Mass at her mother's nursing home. She says she has a list of 2,000 married priests nationwide, including about eight in the Boston area, to whom she can refer people looking for a priest to say a private Mass, conduct a baptism ceremony or witness a wedding.

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Renegade Catholics?

Since 1965 some 20,000 Roman Catholic priests in this country - including two bishops (one from Providence) - have left their church ministry. A majority of them have since married, a number, like Manseau, to former nuns. Today, an estimated 500 married priests live in the Boston area compared to about 800 active diocesan priests. Worldwide, in the last 30 years more than 100,000 priests are believed to have resigned in order to marry.

In the eyes of the Catholic Church ordination into the priesthood is permanent and priestly status irrevocable. Catholic priests who marry are stripped of their clerical

"faculties" and forbidden to function publicly as priests.

A priest who resigns his ministry - or is removed from it by church authorities - is banned from preaching or saying a Mass in public or even assisting at one. He is not allowed to distribute communion or perform rites for the dying except in cases of emergency. While he retains all the spiritual powers of a Catholic priest, he is not supposed to exercise them. Canon or church law forbids priests to function in a diocese without specific permission of the bishop. However, many married priests claim the priest shortage has created an emergency situation that allows them to ignore the rules when there is a need for their services and no diocesan-approved priests to meet it.

Church authorities disagree, declaring that such priests are misinterpreting - and violating - canon law. "There are some staffing problems but there are no priestless parishes and no emergency in this diocese," says John Walsh, director of the Office of Communications of the Archdiocese of Boston. "The bishop is the only one who has the authority to determine the conditions of worship in his diocese, and authority is central to the Catholic Church going all the way back to the apostles. We can't have people acting as freelance bishops, making elaborate interpretations of canon law and practicing some exotic form of Catholicism - those who do are renegade Catholics."

While the Vatican shows no signs of backing down on the issue, support for having both celibate and married priests - as was the case in the Roman Catholic Church until the 12th century and still is in the Orthodox churches - is increasing among American Catholics. Surveys indi-

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Pope John Paul II refuses to consider allowing married Catholic priests to return to church ministry but has permitted the ordination of married former Episcopalian and Lutheran clergymen - an exception that angers many married priests. "The ordinary Catholic is unaware of it, but we already have a married Catholic clergy in this country," says Terence McDonough of Duxbury, a priest of the Society of the Divine Word for 21 years before he resigned to marry. "There are about 70 former Episcopalian and Lutheran ministers who have been ordained as Catholic priests and are still married," he said.

These church-sanctioned married priests are tolerated but kept out of the limelight, according to McDonough, and none has been put in charge of parishes or allowed to serve as chaplains in the armed forces. "They're Catholic priests but second-class citizens," he said.

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Once considered tragic figures and shunned as "fallen" men by other Catholics, married priests today tend to be active citizens, respected in their communities and parishes. Frequently, they support themselves with the skills they acquired as teachers and counselors during their

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One of the married priests whom Haggett has coaxed into service is Ronald Ingalls of Ashland, who recently said Mass for the first time in 23 years, in a private home. A high school English teacher in Newton, the 60-year-old Ingalls grew up in Leominster and was a priest in Harrisburg, Pa. He left the active priesthood in 1971 after 11 years, during which he was both a parish priest and a college chaplain.

Although now married with two teen-age children, Ingalls said he left his ministry because he had trouble reconciling the increasingly conservative views of the Vatican on matters such as birth control with the needs of the people to whom he was ministering. "I wasn't involved with anyone then," he says. "Celibacy was an issue with me, but only one of a number of issues."

Ingalls says his treatment by the church after he took an extended leave of absence from his diocese is still a painful memory. "I was considered a spoiled priest, someone who had broken ranks, and they wanted nothing more to do with me." He didn't return to Harrisburg, Ingalls says, and was never asked to. "Nobody called to ask if I was all right or if I was coming back. It was weird."

Like about half the married priests in the United States, Ingalls was never laicized, that is, given official permission to leave his ministry and to marry in the Catholic Church. To get permission to marry, priests usually have to agree to conditions that many find unacceptably humili-

ating - such as declaring that they were incapable of remaining celibate - and must marry secretly and, often, agree not to live in any area where they were known as priests.

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"There really is no priest shortage; it's a problem of the church's own making," says McDonough, who is also involved with Rent-A-Priest. "There are enough married priests in Boston to fill all the vacancies and the vocations to the priesthood are still there but are being limited by the rules of a church fixed on a nonessential celibacy."

Supreme law: ministry

The 59-year-old McDonough spent most of his ministry as an Air Force chaplain. He withdrew from the priesthood in 1983 in order to marry and now works as a vocational rehabilitation specialist at the Veterans Administration hospital in Bedford.

"I left the active priesthood because the lifestyle was physically and spiritually disabling for me," McDonough says. "Celibacy was the

greater part of it; I didn't want to give up my ministry, but I wanted to have a normal family life."

McDonough and his wife, Susan, married in 1984 and now have two children, ages 6 and 9. McDonough said he met his wife, Susan, in 1981 when he was 46 years old and a chaplain at an Air Force base. "For two years I thought that we were just good friends," he says, "but when I learned I was being assigned to Germany, I realized that I loved her and wanted to marry her."

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He was quite happy during 13 years spent in isolated seminaries training for the priesthood, McDonough says, and only later realized how emotionally undeveloped the process had left him. "The problems are there, but they take a while to surface," he says. "When I was ordained I wasn't really 26 years old, I was still 13 - the age I was when I entered a minor seminary."

McDonough says he is asked to perform a priestly function of some sort on an average of once a month. He says he tries to adhere to canon law and won't officiate at a wedding unless the couple first takes the diocesan marriage preparation course. He frequently says Mass in nursing homes, McDonough says, but only when a canonical or church-licensed priest is unavailable: "In that case, church law allows me to do it."

McDonough says he has written to Cardinal Bernard Law - who has given several dinner receptions for local married priests and their wives but won't meet with representatives of Corpus - asking for clarification of church regulations governing married priests. The cardinal has not replied, he says.

Until convinced otherwise, McDonough says, he will continue to devote his energies to being simultaneously a rehabilitation specialist, a husband and father and a Roman Catholic priest.

"As far as I'm concerned," he says, "the supreme law of the church is ministering to people."

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Living Arts

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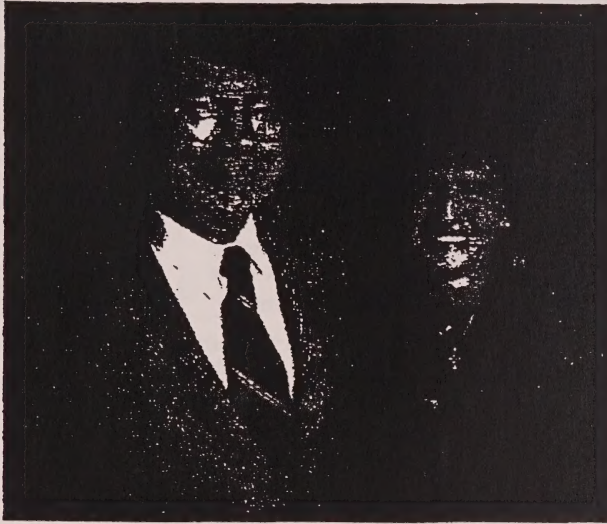
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GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / TOM LANDERS

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GLOBE STAFF PHOTOS / JIM DAVIS

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■ PRIESTS

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Pg 5 of 6

He was quite happy during 13 years spent in isolated seminaries training for the priesthood, McDonough says, and only later realized how emotionally undeveloped the process had left him. "The problems are there, but they take a while to surface," he says. "When I was ordained I wasn't really 26 years old, I was still 13 - the age I was when I entered a minor seminary."

McDonough says he is asked to perform a priestly function of some sort on an average of once a month. He says he tries to adhere to canon law and won't officiate at a wedding unless the couple first takes the diocesan marriage preparation course. He frequently says Mass in nursing homes, McDonough says, but only when a canonical or church-licensed priest is unavailable: "In that case, church law allows me to do it."

McDonough says he has written to Cardinal Bernard Law - who has given several dinner receptions for local married priests and their wives but won't meet with representatives of Corpus - asking for clarification of church regulations governing married priests. The cardinal has not replied, he says.

Until convinced otherwise, McDonough says, he will continue to devote his energies to being simultaneously a rehabilitation specialist, a husband and father and a Roman Catholic priest.

"As far as I'm concerned," he says, "the supreme law of the church is ministering to people."

BOSTON GLOBE
Pg 6 of 6

SUNDAY FOCUS

Clergy drop

From Page 1

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	1970	1980	1994
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■ Burlington, Vt.	802	1,063	2,058
■ Fair Haven	1,373	1,770	2,260
■ Hartford, Ct.	1,459	1,773	1,771
■ Portland, Me.	1,794	1,462	1,765
■ Providence, R.I.	NA	NA	2,795
■ Worcester	1,355	1,073	1,606

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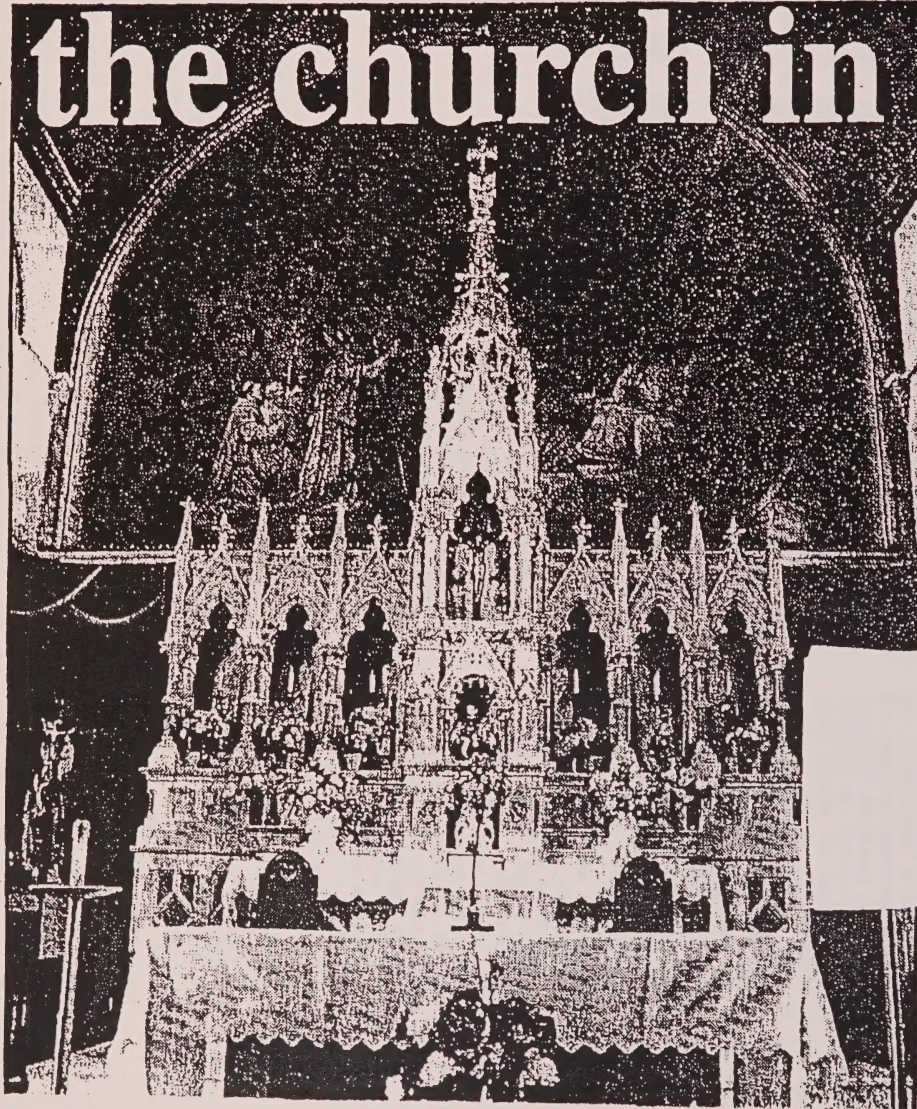
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But a leading Catholic sociologist dismisses such pleas and exhortations as "stopgap measures" that can do nothing to stave off the crisis.

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The Vatican has blamed "pressures on the family, the attraction of material prosperity and social comfort, the sexual revolution and the growth of insecurity, as well as a delay in the age of personal career decision-making."

Many Catholics also say the decline of nuns in parochial schools has taken a heavy toll.

There are 43 percent fewer nuns in the archdiocese today than 30 years ago, and in the last four years the church has drastically cut back the parochial schools.

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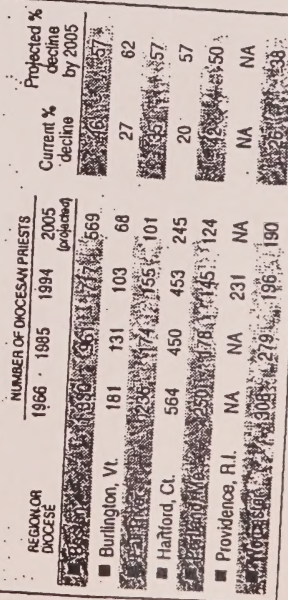
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Fewer shepherds



Changing patterns reflect times

By TIM CORNELL

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Instead of weekly calls at hospitals and nursing homes, priests have pagers, in case an emergency rite needs to be performed.

In Dorchester last Sunday, St. Paul's Church and St. Kevin's Church merged into Holy Family Church.

"People said it was one of the nicest feelings of religion they had ever felt before," said the Rev. William C. Francis of the ceremony last week.

"You'd have to be crazy to say people aren't hurt," he said. "They're hurt but they're not angry... The only thing imposed on the people was reality."

In other parishes, the churches have simply closed.

Last month, the archdiocese closed 10 of the 14 parishes for Polish-speaking Catholics.

"This is a long, long range thing," said John Walsh, spokesman for the archdiocese. "This is something the archdiocese is doing with a lot of planning." □

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February 26, 1995

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	1966	1985	2005 (projected)	
Burlington, Vt.	181	131	103	68
Hartford, Ct.	584	450	453	245
Providence, R.I.	NA	NA	231	NA
			196	190

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(Adeyanju) so
willing to learn
from the
youth, from
the church
he's willing to
learn from
everyone.**

Walter J.
Waldron

By TIM CORNELL

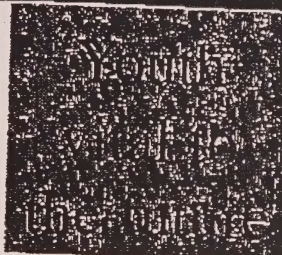
Watching the young seminarian in his church, the Rev. Walter J. Waldron can see why there needs to be new blood in the clergy.

"Age is the greatest curtailment," said Waldron, 55, pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Roxbury. "I can't stay up until 2 in the morning anymore."

Waldron said the seminarian in his charge, Henry Adeyanju, 29, has other talents that go with his youth.

"He's so willing to learn — from the youth, from the church — he's willing to learn from everyone," Waldron said. "He's very comfortable in his role as seminarian moving toward priesthood."

With a year to go until he's ordained, Adeyanju is



unfazed by the priest shortage in Boston. After all, in his native Nigeria there are more than 20,000 parishioners for every priest.

"There is no doubt there is a shortage of priests," said Adeyanju, who is studying at St. John's Seminary in Brighton.

"But I'm still optimistic," he said. "Though there is going to be a decline, I still think young people might be interested."

The celibacy requirement didn't chase Adeyanju from the priesthood, he said, because he felt the calling was too strong.

"There are people who struggle with that, but I know that this is required and I still nurture the vocation," he said. "For me, my sacrifice is for something beyond. It is a special gift I am giving." □

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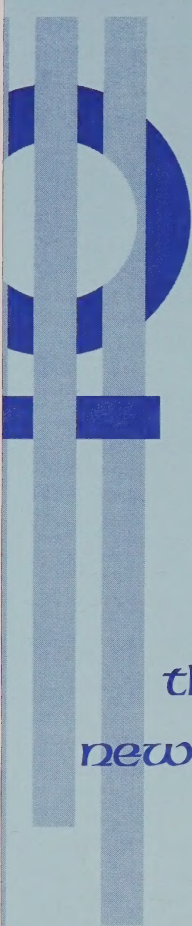
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THE FOLLOWING
REVIEW OF
*the inclusive
new testament*
APPEARED IN
*THE NATIONAL
CATHOLIC REPORTER*
ON SEPTEMBER 8, 1995

Inclusive N.T. translation frees text

THE INCLUSIVE NEW TESTAMENT

Produced by Priests for Equality, PO Box 5243, W. Hyattsville, MD 20782-0243, 1994, 470 pages, \$24.95 hardbound, \$14.95 softbound.

By **NANCY SYLVESTER**

When I saw the flier advertising *The Inclusive New Testament*, I immediately sent away for it. My first casual review of it pleased me very much. I opened to the Gospel of John and read, "A couple had been caught in the act of adultery, though the scribes and Pharisees brought only the woman...." Finally, I thought, an account of that story that I can relate to.

But it wasn't until I took it with me on my retreat that I realized the power of the translation. I felt I was on the road to Emmaus and could say with the disciples, "Weren't our hearts burning in inside us as Jesus talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?"

I felt the scripture breaking open for me in a way that had not happened in a very long time. Freed of having to do my own translation, I could let the words engage me and speak to me as a woman, as a feminist. New insights came to me. I allowed Jesus to come alive in the stories of the early Christian community and made connections with what is happening today in my own life and in the struggles we face as a people and a church. Unlike other attempts I have made to return to scripture, only to be forced to close the book because of sexist and patriarchal language, this time the translation enabled me to

Immaculate Heart of Mary Sr. Nancy Sylvester is vice president of her congregation and lives in Monroe, Mich.

experience the text as a life-giving moment.

This translation is a project of Priests for Equality, an organization of men and women that works for the full participation of women and men in the church and society. The organization began this work in 1988. Although one of the original goals of the group was to "eliminate sexist language," this translation goes far beyond that; it is, in the translators' words, "a reimagining of the holy scriptures and our relationship to them."

The introduction to the text explains the translators' approach, what guidelines and criteria they used and their process. They tried to stay faithful to the original Greek. They tried to understand the ancient truth and then searched for a nonsexist way of expressing it. Of course, this wasn't always possible. They acknowledge that there were some places, particularly in the epistles, where "the point of the passage was so encrusted that to remove the sexist language would necessitate removing the text itself." Although such an admission of the underlying patriarchy of the time is painful, I appreciate the honesty of coming to terms with it. By not glossing over the serious problems Christianity faces from the feminist critique, the translators gain credence.

This translation also has a different look. The translators felt that the familiar divisions of the books of the Bible into chapter and verse did not make for good reading. So they created three levels of section breaks within each gospel and epistle: one to show major shifts in theme or time, one to reflect a shift in scene or topic, and one reflecting minor groupings such as parables, sayings and pericopes. It does retain the traditional chapter-and-verse numbering but in very small type.

Although such a format de-emphasizes the book's "bibleness," I would have preferred the traditional numbering in bolder type and longed for a way to locate a specific gospel or epistle more easily. I guess I want it to be my Bible and longed for tabs.

But more important than format is how this translation heightens our awareness of the power of words. The translators consciously used language to humanize and equalize those relegated to society's margins. They remind us of how the dignity of individuals is enhanced or demeaned by the way we address them. The introduction states, "we do not identify people as their afflictions, impoverishments or infirmities. We do not refer to 'the poor' but rather, 'poorer people' or 'people in need'—to show that

poverty is not an absolute, easily delineated category of people, but a relative condition that touches everyone."

The translators also choose "to use the language of mutuality of human relationships to restore the role and status of women. For example, in Luke 1:7, Elizabeth is no longer described as 'barren'; instead they (Elizabeth and Zechariah) were 'unable to conceive.'" Finally, they acknowledge the many forms in which God appears in our lives, choosing words that express relationship rather than patriarchy and representing Jesus Christ's humanity rather than his maleness.

It is this sensitivity to those who have and continue to be marginalized that removes so many of the regular stumbling blocks I encounter when reading the "official" translations of these texts. This translation frees the text so that you can listen to the Spirit within. This is a book you don't have to read cover to cover, but who knows, you just might do that.

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praise for
the inclusive
new testament

"The text reads smoothly and beautifully, betraying no agenda other than a faithful rendition of the New Testament."

Anne Carr,
Professor of Theology,
The Divinity School,
University of Chicago.

"This version of the Christian Scriptures is more than a new translation. It is a revision springing from the conviction that justice requires a change or course for the barque of Peter. Although it is unlikely to become 'official,' it may well be inspired. Taste and see."

Anne E. Patrick,
Religion Department,
Carleton College.

"*The Inclusive New Testament* is a groundbreaking step toward dealing with the sexism that has undermined the real message of partnership with Jesus. I commend all who worked on *The Inclusive New Testament* for their spiritual courage and their exceptionally important contribution."

Raine Eisler,
Author of *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future* and *Sacred Pleasure: Sex, Myth and the Politics of the Body*.

"Great Translation! Sorely needed and really helpful. My New Testament students will find encouragement in what you have accomplished."

Gerard A. Vanderhaar, STD,
Professor of Religious Studies,
Christian Brothers University,
Memphis, Tennessee.

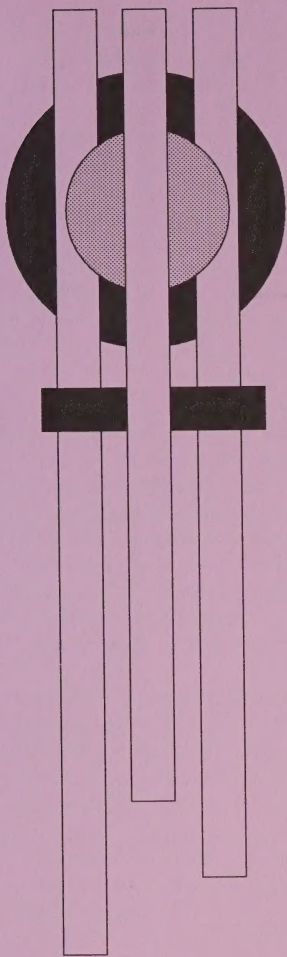
ABOUT THE TRANSLATORS

Priests for Equality is a movement of women and men—lay, religious and clergy—that works for the full participation of women and men in the church and society.

One of Priests for Equality's founding goals, in the words of its seventeen-point charter, is to "eliminate sexist language." A prime focus of our Inclusive Language Project has been to make scripture accessible to those who have been excluded from it for so long. As its charter says, "Language, seemingly innocuous and inconsequential, is in reality an area which reveals unconscious attitudes, prejudices, stereotypes and patterns of discriminatory thinking. Conversely, care in language is a first and necessary step in raising consciousness."

Priests for Equality is celebrating over twenty years of activism. We may be reached at P.O. Box 5243, W. Hyattsville, MD 20782-0243, (301) 699-0042.

Looking for new fundraising ideas for your church, school or non-profit organization?
***The Inclusive New Testament* would be the perfect promotional item! It's easy as 1-2-3:**
(1) We give them to your group at a deep discount, then (2) you sell them and (3) keep the profits for your program!
For all the details, call
Rev. Joseph A. Dearborn
at (301) 699-0042.



the inclusive psalms

*A review by J. Brendan McNulty
Pastor of Sts. Philip and James Parish
Cleveland, Ohio*

For a recent memorial offered for the Hibernians, I was given a chalice and communion dish of Waterford crystal. In these the Body and Blood of Christ are offered to God in thanks and shared with one another in gladness. For Irish Americans, Waterford offers a precious connection with the homeland. For Catholics, the Eucharist offers connection with all that is best about Jesus. In this gift I recognized another step toward the inculturation of Catholic faith in contemporary America.

In the recently published *The Inclusive Psalms* from Priests for Equality, I was given a similar gift which connects to much of what is best about America. This lucid, focused and vibrant translation of praise from the Hebrew scriptures is beautiful art. In much the same way that Waterford discloses the eucharistic word of God made flesh, this new translation of God's word in scripture highlights aspects of Catholic faith which have enriched our lives in America during these past two centuries.

We prize the Catholic traditions of basic baptismal equality of all members of the church; participatory community life; the imperative of justice in all spheres of life; basic freedom and sensitivity to human dignity; ecumenical awareness; and environmental concern. Women and men of our faith and in our culture are translating the experience of Catholics in America into an invitation to become better Catholics and more fully Christian.

This new translation of the Psalms joins with *The Inclusive New Testament* as a continuing exploration of how to better set forth the word of life in our American language and speech. Perhaps the translators will do for the Catholic faith in America what the King James version did for the Protestant faith in former times. English speakers are given a text with the kind of clarity, beauty and grace which give voice to the praise of the Church

on earth—and the power, goodness and truth of God's word to humanity.

The quality of this text is that it is not mere poetic treatment of the *verbum Dei* but rather a real incarnation in this time and place. I believe this gift to the Catholic people of America is an invitation to speak in poetry rather than in mere prose. One no longer needs to cringe or feel sad when a text care-

"This lucid, focused and vibrant translation of praise from the Hebrew scriptures is beautiful art."

lessly excludes persons because of gender, hardship or class. In embracing more readily the variety of persons given to the church by the Spirit, the text has a Catholic sensitivity that is a trust as well as a tradition. Our language easily grows to express this Catholic faith. So too should our prayer. For whom did Jesus not shed his blood?

The translation offers an added benefit to those who pray aloud, becoming almost a numinous sacramental therapy. When preachers and preachers practice listening to poetry of many kinds and shape their language arts with a vehicle like *The Inclusive Psalms*, the liturgy is blessed with a more dignified and majestic breaking open of the word of God for faithful sharing. No one who speaks in public can afford to neglect the sound of beautiful language. The value of praying these texts aloud is truth clothed in beauty; the power of God's word to purify our lips as well as our hearts is another gift.

The translators discerned that a Hebrew word, *selah*, which occurs often in the psalm text and is usually left untranslated, suggests a pause in the narration to allow for some communal or personal assent or affirmation from the congregation. When retained in the format of this translation there is a natural launch into reflection similar to the pattern of the psalm prayers in the ritual of the Lit-

urgy of the Hours. The vocal prayer becomes the runway for the mind and heart to be lifted up to God.

They have also retained the name *Adonai* as the name for God. This tradition of naming God indirectly, learned from the rabbis of Israel, still has a warmth and personal quality which Jesus developed in his own prayer. Through these psalms we can hear the Only Begotten in an outpouring of the heart for the God who loved so well.

To know one's name is to have a claim on the person. These songs of both the old and the "new" Israel make a claim on the One who graciously names so many to be God's own children. God binds lives heart-to-heart in love. When the beloved is so personal and the love so face-to-face, how natural for Jesus to name God *Abba*—and teach us to do so as well.

Usually we emphasize meaning what we say when practicing prayer. *The Inclusive Psalms* also require us to say what we mean. If women are included when men are named, then why not name them? This translation says explicitly what is meant implicitly—thus "Abraham and Sarah," "Leah, Rachel and Jacob," and so forth. If we do not mean to include them, are we then meaning to exclude them? The translation becomes very natural reading.

I am pleased because *The Inclusive Psalms* build upon the orthodox truth of many previous English versions and develops an orthopraxis. The Catholic experience easily embraces both beauty and truth in speaking of God's goodness.

This praise of God in word and Eucharist can richly feed the hungers of the human heart in personal prayer as well as in liturgical worship. The full surrender of ourselves to God in Christ is proclaimed and fulfilled. Both the intellect and will are engaged directly. Finally!

So why choose a Dixie cup when Waterford is available?

—J. Brendan McNulty

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about the translators

Priests for Equality is a movement of women and men—lay, religious and clergy—working for the full participation of women and men in the church and society.

One of Priests for Equality's founding goals, in the words of its seventeen-point charter, is to "eliminate sexist language." A prime focus of our Inclusive Language Project has been to make scripture accessible to those who have been excluded from it for so long. As its charter says, "Language, seemingly innocuous and inconsequential, is in reality an area which reveals unconscious attitudes, prejudices, stereotypes and patterns of discriminatory thinking. Conversely, care in language is a first and necessary step in raising consciousness."

Priests for Equality plans to complete its inclusive language translation of the entire Bible by the year 2000, its twenty-fifth anniversary. For more information how you can be part of this exciting project, contact Joe Dearborn at Priests for Equality, P.O. Box 5243, W. Hyattsville, MD 20782-0243, or call (301) 699-0042.

Looking for new fundraising ideas for your church, school, or non-profit organization?

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book I

1

- ¹ Happiness comes to those
 who reject the path of violence,
who refuse to associate with criminals
 or even to sit with people who belittle others.
- ² No, happiness comes to those
 who delight in the Law of Our God
 and meditate on it day and night.
- ³ They're like trees planted by flowing water—
 they bear fruit in every season,
and their leaves never wither:
 everything they do will prosper.
- ⁴ But not wrongdoers!
 They're like chaff that the wind blows away.
- ⁵ They won't have a taproot to anchor them
 when judgment comes,
nor will corrupt individuals be given a place
 at the gathering of the Just.
- ⁶ Our God watches over the steps
 of those who do justice;
but those on a path of violence and injustice
 will find themselves irretrievably lost.

- ¹ Why are the nations creating such an uproar?
Why all this commotion among the peoples?
- ² Those who hold power
are taking their stand,
gathering their forces against Our God,
against God's Anointed One.
- ³ "Let's break their chains!" they say.
Let's throw off their shackles!"
- ⁴ But the One who sits enthroned in the heavens laughs;
the Sovereign One derides them,
- ⁵ then rebukes them in anger
and, enraged, terrifies them:
- ⁶ "It is I who installed my ruler on Zion,
on the mountain of my holiness!"
- ⁷ I will proclaim God's decree—
Our God said to me:
"You are my own.
It is I who have begotten you this day.
- ⁸ Just ask—I'll give you the nations as your inheritance!
I'll give you the ends of the earth as your possession!
- ⁹ You'll break them with an iron scepter;
you'll shatter them as easily as a clay pot."
- ¹⁰ So, you rulers, be wise!
And you who hold power, stand warned!
- ¹¹ Serve Our God and rejoice—
but do so with fear and trembling.
- ¹² Pay homage to God's Own
lest you be destroyed on your way in a blaze of anger—
for God's passion can flare up with no warning.

Happiness comes to those
who make God their refuge!

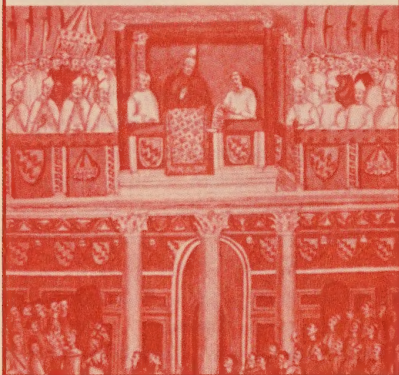
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